

Vigo County History - 1968

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HISTORY

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TOWNSHIPS

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1968

**HISTORY
OF
VIGO COUNTY, INDIANA
AND ITS
TOWNSHIPS**

by
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VIGO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.**

1968 marks the 150th anniversary of the founding of Vigo county. It was felt that a concise history of the county, its twelve townships and the man for whom the county was named would fill a definite need and commemorate the Sesquicentennial event.

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VIGO COUNTY

IN the beginning of the year 1818 this area was Sullivan county, and the settlement in the vicinity of Fort Harrison became fully entitled to be stricken off and have their own convenient seat of justice, and this public necessity was heeded by the legislature. The following is the act:

AN ACT FOR THE FORMATION OF A NEW COUNTY OFF OF THE COUNTY OF SULLIVAN. APPROVED, January 21, 1818.

SECTION 1. Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana, That from the fifteenth day of February next, all that part of the county of Sullivan included in the following bounds shall form and constitute a new county, that is to say: Beginning at a point on the Wabash river where the section line between fractions 14 and 23, in Range 11 west, Township 10 north, strikes the same; thence east with said line to where it intersects the range line dividing Ranges 6 and 7 west, Township 10 north; thence with said range line to the Indian boundary; thence north with said boundary to the division line between the State of Indiana and the Illinois Territory; thence south with said line to where it strikes the Wabash river; thence down said river to the place of beginning.

SECTION 2. The said new county shall from and after the fifteenth day of February next be known and designated by the name and style of Vigo county, and it shall enjoy all the rights, privileges and jurisdictions which to a separate county do or may properly appertain and belong.

SECTION 3. That Elihu Stout, of Knox county; John Allen, of Daviess county; Charles Scott, of Sullivan county; James D. Jones, of Gibson county; and Marstin G. Clark, of Washington county; be, and they are hereby appointed commissioners to designate the place for the seat of justice of Vigo county, agreeably to an act entitled "An act for fixing the seats of justice in all new counties hereafter to be laid off." The commissioners above named shall convene at the house of Trueman Blackman, in the neighborhood of Fort Harrison, on the third Monday of March next, and then proceed to discharge the duties assigned them by law.

SECTION 4. The board of commissioners, of said new county of Vigo, shall, within twelve months after the permanent seat of justice shall have been established, proceed to erect the necessary public buildings thereon.

SECTION 5. Until suitable accomodations can be had, in the opinion of the circuit court at the seat of justice of said new county, all the courts of justice of the same shall meet at the house of Trueman Blackman, near Fort Harrison, from whence they may adjourn, if they think proper, to any other suitable place near the center of said new county, and as soon as the public buildings are, in the opinion of the circuit court, in a sufficient state of forwardness for their accommodation, the courts shall adjourn to the county seat; and after that time the circuit court and all other courts necessary to be holden at the seat of justice of the county aforesaid, shall be held at the county seat established for said county.

SECTION 6. Whenever the seat of justice of the said new county shall have been established, the person or persons authorized by law to lay off the lots and sell the same shall reserve ten per centum on the net proceeds of the whole sale of lots for the use of a county library in said new county, which sum or sums of money so received shall be paid over to such person or persons as may be authorized to receive the same in such manner and in such installments as shall be authorized by law.

SECTION 7. BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the said county of Vigo, which was formerly a part of Sullivan, shall form a part of the respective counties of Knox, Daviess and Sullivan, for the purpose of electing senators and representatives to the General Assembly, until otherwise directed by law, in the same manner as if this act had not been passed.

SECTION 8. This act to take effect and be in force from and after its publication.

This was the new county of Vigo (pronounced VEEGO). The boundary lines originally differed materially from those of the present. The Indian boundary line was the "Ten o'clock line" known to the Indians and the early settlers. This line, running in a northwest and southeast direction, passed the mouth of Raccoon creek in Parke county and passed east of Brazil to White river in Jackson county.

Vigo county then included on the east a strip two miles wide, commencing at the southeast corner of the county, and extending north to the south line of Township 13 and along the range line between 6 and 7, as now, but striking the Indian boundary line in what is now Parke county; then going northwest past the mouth of Raccoon creek to the State line. The county then included what is now a part of Clay, and the southwest part of Parke, and nearly the south half of what is now Vermillion county.

It continued in this shape until January 10, 1819. On the first day of January of that year the legislature passed an act containing the following: "After the 10th of January next all that part of the county of Sullivan lying within the following bounds to wit: beginning on the Wabash river at the southwest of the said county of Vigo on the said river Wabash; thence with the meanders of the same to where the township line dividing 9 and 10 intersects the Wabash; thence east with the said line to the range line dividing Ranges 6 and 7; thence north with the said line between Ranges 6 and 7 to the southeast corner of Vigo county, shall be, and the same is hereby attached and shall form a part of said county of Vigo."

January 9, 1821, the new county of Parke was formed from the north part of Vigo county. This fixed the north boundary line of Vigo county as it is now.

The same year, December 31, 1821, the new county of Putnam was formed, and that again remapped Vigo. This act remained in force one year, when an amendatory act was passed, which restored to Vigo county her original boundary lines as they existed before Putnam was formed.

In time some confusion arose as to the exact boundary lines, and the jurisdiction, especially of the counties lying along the Wabash river. In 1852, in order to correct any inaccuracies in the statutory definition of different counties' boundary lines, the general assembly passed an act dividing the State into counties and defining their boundary lines. Then in 1873 a supplemental act to the above was passed, and this described the lines bounding Vigo county, especially the county's east line, dividing Vigo and Clay. It so remains at present, and in all probability will not be subject to any more changes.

The newly created county was named in honor of Colonel Francis Vigo, known as the Spanish merchant, a staunch friend of the people in the Northwest Territory.

Born in Sardinia in 1747, a subject of Italy, he enlisted in the Spanish army and came to America. He landed at New Orleans, then Spanish territory, and began trading with the Indians while still in military service. Before long in his trips up the Mississippi river he opened a fur-trading establishment at St. Louis where he soon became an important factor in the fur trade with the Indians.

Francis Vigo and George Rogers Clark met for the first time on January 29th, 1779. If they had not met - these two men who were very necessary to each other - the outcome of the Revolutionary War might have been very different.

Without Vigo's financial support, General Clark would never have been able to best the British forces and capture the Northwest Territory for the United States. From their efforts came the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin.

On July 4, 1832 the people of Vigo county extended to Colonel Vigo a cordial invitation to visit here. At the advanced age of 92 years he came on his last visit to the people he loved so well. This visit undoubtedly influenced him when he made his will dated December 9, 1834, in which he bequeathed \$500 to Vigo county to be used to purchase a bell for the courthouse. Colonel Vigo died in 1836 and was buried in Vincennes. The money owed to him by our government since 1779 was finally repaid with interest in 1876 to his estate, and when our present courthouse was finished in 1889 Colonel Vigo's bequest was used to help purchase the bell which still hangs in the tower and chimes the hours - the Vigo Bell!

As new generations of children begin to speak and newcomers move in to this area it becomes necessary to emphasize the correct pronunciation of the name of our county.

Any student of modern languages, including children over six, knows that in all European languages, the letter "i" in such cases is pronounced long "e". Everyone accepts the proper pronunciation for Tito, Mussolini, the Philippines, Iwo Jima, and even the Marines.

Let us not fail to tender to patriot Colonel Francis Vigo who did so much for our nation, our state and our county, our humble thanks and the respect of pronouncing his name correctly as if it were spelled "VEEGO".

The Vigo Bell will help remind us of the debt we owe to Francis Vigo in America's fight for freedom in the great Northwest Territory during the Revolutionary War.

History of

HARRISON TOWNSHIP

IN 1957 the City of Terre Haute annexed the remaining portion of Harrison Township and now this township does not appear on the maps as the city and township occupy the same boundaries.

There were only four original townships in Vigo county laid off by the Board of Commissioners on March 11, 1819. These four were: Honey Creek, Wabash, Harrison and Independence.

Harrison Township was all that territory in Vigo county lying east of the Wabash river and bounded on the north by Wabash township and on the south by Honey Creek township. Elections in Harrison Township were to be held at Henry Redford's house. John Britton was appointed constable.

On May 9, 1820, Harrison Township was newly defined as "all that part of the county lying east of the Wabash river; on the north by Otter Creek as far up the main branch as Sec. 27, where the same forks; thence with the south fork to the east line of the county; thence south to the line dividing Township 11 and Township 12; thence west with said township line to the Wabash river."

This township derived its name from General William Henry Harrison, who had advanced up the Wabash Valley from Vincennes on his way to the Battle of Tippecanoe, stopping off to build Fort Harrison in the Fall of 1811.

About 1816 settlers began to come in and located in this vicinity. The town of Terre Haute was platted in that year. Among the first settlers of Harrison Township were Joseph Richardson, Truman Blackman, John Hamilton (a veteran of the Revolutionary War), Robert Graham and Caleb Crawford. Isaac Lambert built a log cabin on what is now the North Thirteenth Street Road. It later became known as the Roger's Place.

The honor of being first to settle on new land carries with it much responsibility. Truman Blackman became the first sheriff of Vigo county. Isaac Lambert became one of the first county commissioners appointed in 1818. His brother-in-law John Dickson came out here with his family at the same time. These two families and the Markle family all settled on Otter Creek. Markle's Mill was established in 1816 and destroyed by fire in 1938. Lambert and Dickson built their mill on Honey Creek south of Terre Haute, but it could not withstand the heavy rains and high water and was partially washed away.

Joshua Olds who had come out to Indiana with the Markle family in 1816, was a valuable addition to the pioneer community as he was a skilled millwright and clever cabinet worker. He made most of the first chairs in Vigo county and the surrounding country side, as well as built the first mills.

Of the twelve townships in Vigo county, Harrison Township has always been the most populous because it has included Fort Harrison and the city of Terre Haute.

There have been five cemeteries in Harrison Township. The Rogers Graveyard is located in Sec. 12 on the extreme eastern edge of the township. Grandview Cemetery in Sec. 34 is located on the southern edge of the township. Calvary Cemetery in Sec. 24 is on the eastern city limits of Kean Lane. Woodlawn Cemetery in Sec. 16 is west of the U. S. Highway 41 between Second and Eighth Avenues, and east of First street. There is no trace left of the first Terre Haute Burying Ground in Sec. 21 on the Wabash river bank about where the parking lot is now for the Pillsbury Co.

History of HONEY CREEK TOWNSHIP

HONEY CREEK TOWNSHIP was one of the four original townships laid off by the Board of Commissioners on March 11, 1819. The first township defined in the record was Honey Creek, bounded as follows: "Commencing and running with the south line of the county from the river to the east line of the county to the line dividing Townships 11 and 12 north, thence with said line to where the main branch of Honey Creek crosses the same, thence down said creek, where it empties into the Wabash river, and down the stream to the place of beginning."

This first record also set the location for elections in Honey Creek Township at the home of Stephen Campbell. John Harris was appointed constable.

On May 9th, 1820, new lines for Honey Creek Township were made as follows: "All that part of the county included in Township 11 north, and lying east of the Wabash river, shall hereafter form Honey Creek Township." Elections were to be held at the house of Joseph Lockwood, near Lambert & Dickson's Mill.

This township lies directly south of Harrison Township and takes its name from Honey Creek. The first settler in Honey Creek Township was George Clem, who was here as early as 1812. He built just north of the bridge which crosses Honey Creek, now a state road. George Kruzan lived near here sometime later.

Other early settlers in the western part of the township were Judge Hopkins, Jeremiah Moat, Truman Blackman, the first sheriff of Vigo county, and the Durhams. These settlers chose land on the same road, but south of the bridge. Among the settlers from 1816 to 1818 were: Isaac Lambert, William McComb, Holden Siston, John Curry, Duncan Darrow, William Blocksom and John Dickson. Lambert and Dickson became business partners and erected the first mill on Honey Creek in 1822.

George Jordan came here in 1817 and cropped the first year on Lambert's place. Isaac Pointer, John Blocksom and his sons William and Jerry came from Ohio and settled near the Hull Graveyard.

In the southeastern part of Honey Creek Township were Daniel Solesby (or Soesby) a Revolutionary War veteran, Robert Bratton, and John and Robert McCoskey, all here by 1822. Samuel Young was also an early settler near where the little village of Youngstown now stands, the only town in the township. It was laid out in 1865 by Chauncey Carr. The first business house was built in 1868 by George Planett, who was also the first postmaster. J. B. McCoskey & Son ran the country grocery store, and in 1869 he became the postmaster.

Each of the 20 families here in 1817 raised a small field of cotton which was spun and woven into cloth. The last wild bear ever seen in Honey Creek Township was killed by William Durham in 1824.

The first church in this township was the Methodist organized as early as 1818-1820. Clinton Shattuck and Joseph Thayer were the first school teachers.

The Poplar Hill or Hull Graveyard was located on the edges of Sec. 20 and Sec. 21 near the old Lambert place. The first grave was that of Martin Braddock who drowned in 1820. The Durham Graveyard was located in Sec. 7 near the Grove Church. In the northeast part of the township is located Mt. Pleasant Cemetery on Sec. 2. McDaniels Cemetery is located on Sec. 13. The old Smith Burying Ground is in Sec. 25.

History of

FAYETTE TOWNSHIP

FAYETTE TOWNSHIP is one of the oldest organized townships in Vigo county. Its name "Fayette" is derived from an abbreviation of "LaFayette", but by whom the name was given is not now known.

The township is in the northwest corner of Vigo county, and is bounded on the north by Vermillion county, the Wabash river on the east separates it from Otter Creek Township, on the south by Sugar Creek and by the State of Illinois on the west. It has numerous streams such as Coal Creek, Salt Creek and Brouillette Creek to name a few.

Fayette Township has been known as such since about 1821, although it had a political existence under another name. It was originally Independence Township.

The first man to pitch a tent or build a cabin within the township limits was Jacob Newcomer who located on a spot just northeast of Sandford in 1813. He did not purchase land or attempt to establish a permanent settlement and after a few years moved away.

The first permanent settler was Daniel Barbour who came with his family from Jefferson county, New York, in the latter part of 1817. He entered land in Sec. 18, which is now known as "Barbour's Corners", near New Goshen at the old intersection of U. S. 150 and the road to Clinton. Mr. Barbour erected the first cabin and moved into it on New Year's Day, 1818.

In 1818 other families, all from New York, moved into the township; those of Elisha Parsons, Colonel Baldwin, Mrs. Holmes, Joshua Martin and Daniel McCullough. Dr. John Durkee built a cabin on the northwest quarter of Sec. 18 in January, 1818. He was the first physician in the township followed by Dr. Hubbard. They had so few patients, however, that Dr. Durkee established a ferry across the Wabash river in August, 1818, and Dr. Hubbard turned to chair making. Both were also farmers. The first ferryman was Colonel Baldwin who afterward became a prominent citizen of Edgar county, Illinois.

Corey Barbour was probably the first magistrate in the township serving prior to 1830. The first post office in Fayette Township was established at New Market in the store of E. S. Wolf, who acted as postmaster. Another source states that William Shuey kept the first post office in 1840.

Prominent among those settlers who came in from Virginia and North Carolina were the Shirleys, Funkhousers, Hays and Whitesels, also Frederick Tyser and his half-brother Orrin Dowdy.

A castor-oil mill was also at one time in successful operation at New Market. Its owner was Henry Calder. One of the stone burrs from this mill is now located at the front entrance walk of the Historical Museum, 1411 South Sixth street, Terre Haute, Indiana. New Market was also a stage coach stop and trading center.

The first mill erected and operated was a horse mill built by Mr. Revenaugh. The first water mill was the old Clark mill on Coal Creek at the crossing of the Darwin Road. A man named Washburn built a mill on Brouillette Creek about 1840. Mallory's mill on Coal Creek was later owned by Samuel Whitesel. A horse mill once stood on land belonging to J. H. Shank. The first store kept in the township was opened by Henry Clark who also ran the first and only distillery in the township.

The southeastern part of Fayette Township was generally

settled by Irish farmers, the McCaffreys, Butlers and Wards. Several veterans of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 chose this township for their home. William Bandy and Drummer Davis had served in the Battle of Fort Harrison. Frederick Tyser fought at the battle of New Orleans. Peter Mallory, who settled here in 1818, was one of General Harrison's soldiers at Fort Harrison.

There are, or were at one time, fourteen cemeteries in Fayette Township. In Sec. 22 are Rose Hill Cemetery, Rose Hill U. B. Cemetery and the Carson Cemetery. The Haymaker Cemetery is in Sec. 14; New Vermillion in Sec. 26; the James and Bethel in Sec. 36; Brick Church Graveyard in Sec. 6; Barbour in Sec. 18; Coal Creek in Sec. 32; Hay and Keith in Sec. 20; Scott in Sec. 5; and Shepherd in Sec. 4.

Fayette Township has been described as "a timbered township, mostly clay soil, adapted to wheat and grass, containing rich deposits of coal and watered with several small streams."

History of SUGAR CREEK TOWNSHIP

SUGAR CREEK TOWNSHIP was cut off from Wabash Township on May 9, 1820, when it included all of that part of Vigo county lying west of the Wabash river. The new township derived its name from Sugar Creek, so called from the large numbers of sugar maple trees along its banks. This vicinity was noted for its maple sugar at an early time, and considerable quantities were still being made in 1874 according to our early history sources.

The settlements were made in 1818, and the first settlers were James Bennett, John Sheets, John Ray, John Reese, Henry Kuykendall, Reuben Newton, James Hicklin, Joseph Malcom, Micajah Goodman, Henry Hearn, Henry Middleton and John Cruse. Another historian included John Smith, Dennis Hearn, Samuel Middleton, Thomas McCullough, and the brothers Henry and David Smith.

The first white child born in Sugar Creek Township was Daniel Kuykendall, son of Henry, who settled in Sec. 22 about 1823 and built the first mill on Sugar Creek.

John Reese was the first Justice of the Peace. James Sturges built the first saw mill in 1820. James Bennett built a grist mill about 1820 and sometime after connected it with an oil mill and carding machine. He also built the first brick house.

In 1831 Joseph Malcom was granted permission to establish and keep in operation a public ferry over the Wabash river. This was later known as Cox's Ferry. In the autumn of 1846 George Broadhurst sank the first coal shaft.

The first settlers found the township wholly covered with timber, and in many portions quite rough and broken. It proved to be good land for wheat, grass and potatoes, and abounded with coal deposits.

New Hope was the first church built in the township. It was built in 1824 by the pioneers of Presbyterian faith, each family contributing at least one log. The church was constructed of huge poplar legs hewn on two sides only.

Where West Terre Haute is now located was first the little village known as McQuilkinsville or Macksville established by Samuel McQuilkin and the plat recorded November 23, 1836. The construction of the National Road helped bring trade to the town and in 1880 the town had a population of over 250.

Bloomtown was laid out in 1858 by Hiram Bloom 6 miles west of Terre Haute on the Old Paris Road, and a 1/2 mile north of the Vandalia Railroad. The primary source of employment and revenue in Bloomtown was the timber from the densely covered bottom lands, with its fine stands of black walnut trees. The name of the post office was Nelson.

St. Mary's, Indiana was never divided into town lots, and grew to its present size without any effort to build up the town. St. Mary-of-the-Woods College has furnished the growth and employment for the villagers over the years.

There are ten cemeteries in Sugar Creek Township. In Sec. 1 is St. Mary's Cemetery; Pisgah in Sec. 4; Missionary Baptist in Sec. 6; Barnhart in Sec. 8; David Smith in Sec. 21; Bethesda in Sec. 23; Bennett in Sec. 24; New Hope in Sec. 2; the Black Cemetery on the State line; and the Caldwell Cemetery in Sec. 35.

History of NEVINS TOWNSHIP

NEVINS TOWNSHIP was formed during the May term of the State legislature in 1822, at the petition of the citizens of Otter Creek township, for the formation of a new township on the east side of that township, as follows: All that part of Otter Creek Township lying east of the center of Range 8.

Nevins Township lies in the extreme northeast part of Vigo county, bounded on the north by Parke county; on the east by Clay county; on the south by Clay county and Lost Creek Township; and on the west by Otter Creek Township. It is five miles in width from east to west, and six miles long from north to south, and contains nearly 20,000 acres of land.

Branches of Otter Creek rise in different parts of the township and flow from the east side through and leave at the western limit, affording water for stock and drainage. The surface of the township is hilly and covered with timber, except a portion in the northwest corner called "Henry's Prairie" in 1880. A portion of this is also called "Wet Prairie" and is surrounded by groves of yellow oak trees.

The name "Nevins" was given in honor of one of the earliest settlers Jeremiah Nevins who came here with his family from Kentucky in about 1818. He was a wheelright by trade and made many of the spinning wheels so treasured by present day collectors.

The earliest resident of Nevins township was doubtless William Adams who came with his family from Kentucky in about 1816. He settled on Raccoon bottom in the heavy timber, and probably built the first house, a log cabin 18 by 20 feet, with stick chimney.

At the same time the Green family arrived from New York and settled near Creal's Mills, building the first grist and saw mills in the township.

In about 1818 the brothers John Adams, a blacksmith, and Samuel Adams, a farmer, settled just west of what is now Fontanet, formerly Fountain Station.

Starling Lambert was also one of the earliest settlers, coming here with a large family from Kentucky in 1818. He also settled on the Raccoon bottom, later moving to the head of the creek.

The first laid-out road in the township was the old Greencastle Road from Terre Haute to Greencastle. On this road was located the first store kept by Richard Pruett about two miles west of the present site of Fontanet.

John Hoffman came to Nevins Township about 1818 and settled on Section 29 where he entered 80 acres of land. He was a native of Pennsylvania and claimed to have driven the first cut nail ever manufactured in the new world.

The first school house in Nevins Township was located about one and one-half miles north of Fontanet in the middle of the timber. It was built of logs, with nearly one entire end left open for the admission of the huge fire logs of that time. The first teacher was John McGinnis, and the school was taught on the subscription system. The modest sum of \$1.50 per pupil for a three months term was charged as tuition for the 18 to 20 pupils.

The first doctor in the township was Alexander Hodgkiss, located on the Terre Haute Road near Markle's Mill.

The first preacher is supposed to have been the Rev. Billings, a Baptist. The first church was built by the Christian denomination about 2 1/2 miles northwest of Fontanet. It was built of logs, 36 by 40 feet, and has long since disappeared. The brothers Michael and Job Coombs were the first preachers there.

The first post office in Nevins Township was at Fruit Hill. John Bell was the first postmaster. This was soon discontinued, and the post office was established at Fountain (Fontanet) with G. W. Morland as postmaster.

One of the first coal mines to be opened in Vigo county was the one started in 1871 by Daniel Webster and was responsible for the little village of Coal Bluff.

Cemeteries listed in Nevins Township included Burnett Cemetery in Sec. 27, Sulphur Springs in Sec. 11, Cress Cemetery in Sec. 1, Adkins Cemetery in Sec. 12, and the McClintock Cemetery in Sec. 14.

History of PRAIRIE CREEK TOWNSHIP

PRAIRIE CREEK TOWNSHIP, as originally organized, consisted of about 35 square miles of territory. In 1856 the northern tier of sections were taken from this township and added to Prairieton Township.

The first wagon road opened in or through the township was known as the old army road, and was opened and used for communication between Fort Knox and Fort Harrison during the War of 1812. The present state road was laid out in 1823.

The first house in the township was built by Joseph Liston. When he returned to civilization to bring his family out to their new home, Thomas Pound and his family and some other people took possession of this unfinished house during his absence and recorded themselves as "the first family passing a night as residents of Prairie Creek Township." This event occurred late in 1816.

Almost at the same date of this settlement, another group located on the army road near the Lykins Cemetery location now. The first settlers here were David Lykins, Josiah Wilson, William Armstrong and possibly others.

Between this date and 1820 some 25 or 30 more families settled in the township. We know of Dr. E. Shattuck, William Paddock, William Foster, Thomas and Athol Furgeson, Armstrong McCabe, Henry King, David Kelly, James Johnston, William and Abijah Thomas, William Drake, Isaac LeForge, Elijah Cayson, Nicholas Yeager, Edmund Liston and Asa Frake.

One of the first houses was built by James Johnston in 1816, after buying the land at the first land sale in Vigo county. This was later purchased by James Piety who settled here in 1826. Benoni Trueblood and Mitchell Simmons came in as early as 1823.

An early post office was located at the Lykins settlement about 1817. David Lykins was appointed postmaster in 1831. The first church was built about 1819 and was located on the site of the Baptist church built in 1880.

Accounts differ as to when the first school house was built. One says 1818, another says in 1821 where Nicholas Yeager taught, and still another states that the first was built on a hill east of Middletown in 1822.

William Armstrong is credited with building the first grist mill in 1817 on the old county road at the upper end of Battle Row. At this same location was built a "horse-mill" distillery.

Isaiah Wilson was the first blacksmith, in fact he seems to have performed all mechanical work of the township up to 1818. About this date Samuel Keen established a smith shop. Mr. Wilson then had time to construct a much-needed cotton gin. From 15 to 30 acres of cotton were grown annually on Battle Row Prairie for many years and as late as 1840 patches of from 1/4 to 2 acres were grown in many parts of the township.

Up to 1825 the principal business center of the township was on Battle Row. Here was the grist mill, cotton gin, post office, doctor, attorney, blacksmith, wagonmaker and undertaker.

In 1830 Warren Harper was the principal cabinet maker in the township. The first pottery was opened at a place known as Pottersville for miles around.

The old hotel building built in 1836 in Middletown was for many years a stagecoach stop. Here the horses were changed, and

the passengers refreshed. And it was here that twice a day the idle villagers congregated to stare at the travelers and hear the latest news.

Cemeteries in Prairie Creek Township were located very early and some are most difficult, if not impossible, to find now. Shattuck Cemetery is in Sec. 16, Watson in Sec. 21, Lykin in Sec. 29, Stout and Middletown cemeteries are in Sec. 26, Thomas in Sec. 23, Kerchival and Staggs cemeteries in Sec. 25, and Prairie Creek Cemetery in Sec. 34.

History of RILEY TOWNSHIP

RILEY TOWNSHIP is situated on the east side of Vigo county, its boundaries being Lost Creek Township on the north, Clay county on the east, Pierson Township on the south, and Honey Creek Township on the west.

The earliest settlers located in the timber and upon the highest ground, avoiding the prairie on account of its marshy nature and consequent unhealthiness. In fact, at that time, it was not considered possible that it ever could be settled upon as farming land. The only way in which it could be utilized, in the minds of the pioneers, was as pasture land.

The first settlement in Riley Township was made near the southern line in 1818, when John, Samuel and William Ray arrived with their families, accompanied by John Pierce, Caleb Trueblood and William Harris.

Another source states that the first settler in the township was the last-named William Harris who made improvements on Sec. 23 in 1820. At this time the Indians were still in possession of the county.

Soon after 1818 Deacon Johnson and family arrived. Next to settle were Samuel and James Thompson who located on Sec. 26 in 1822. The Thompson's were natives of North Carolina, but came into the township from Kentucky. They were shortly followed by Thomas Green, Isaac Pierce, John Harkness, John Jackson, James Ferrill and Samuel Mattox.

At a later period arrived the members of the settlement east of where Lockport (Riley, Ind.) now stands, among whom were David S. and Nathan Lee, John Reece, George Armstrong, David Tobey, Reason T. Mattox, David Holston and George and William Brill.

Settlers in the northern section began to immigrate about 1830, the majority of them hailing from Ohio and eastern Indiana. They were John Rector, Stephen Hawley, John McGriff, Thomas and Benjamin Mewhinney, Joshua and Elisha Wyeth, Martin Bratt and a Mr. Phillips.

Thomas Greene is alleged to have built the first mill on Honey Creek.

The nearest trading point was Terre Haute, made up at that time of a few log cabins and a log jail. Rolla's mill on Eel River was simply a corn cracker. The journey there had to be made after dark to avoid the countless swarms of green-headed horse flies which infested the long prairie grass.

Sources of early history disagree on practically all of the recorded "first" in Riley Township. The first white child born in the township was either Alfred Thompson, son of Samuel Thompson, or John Pierce, William McCaw or William Ray.

The first weddings were Richard Brock to Ann Maynard and Felix Evans to Elizabeth Perkins which occurred about 1822 and William Ray performed the ceremonies as first justice of the peace. Another source gives that distinction to John Jackson.

During the construction of the Wabash & Erie Canal, the little village of Lockport (now Riley, Ind.) was laid out and settled on land originally owned by Nathaniel Donham. In 1874 it was a station of the Cincinnati & Terre Haute Railroad.

Riley Township has fifteen cemeteries although some of them are most difficult to find without a guide who knows the terrain. Me-

whinney Cemetery is in Sec. 1 in the northeast corner of the township 1 mile south of the Bloomington Road. Cooper Cemetery in Sec. 3 is 1 1/2 miles west. Donham Cemetery in Sec. 12 is 1 mile south of Mewhinney. The Oak Hill cemeteries are in Sec. 14 and 23. Old Oak Hill in Sec. 27 is further north. Stark Cemetery is in Sec. 9. Lone Hill in Sec. 10 is across the road and a little to the east of Stark. The Ray Burying Ground and the Parker Cemetery are both in Sec. 19. Miner Cemetery in Sec. 30 is west of Keller and a little north of the road. Swarts in Sec. 20 is 1 mile west of Riley on the south side of the road. McMasters Cemetery in Sec. 15 is 1 mile west and close to the road on north from Old Oak Hill; the Rumbley Cemetery in Sec. 27 1 mile south of Riley and east; and the Christian Church, or Liberty Cemetery, is on the road running 1/2 mile west of Riley and south.

Earliest school teachers in Riley Township were John Dickie and Jared Lykens.

History of
OTTER CREEK TOWNSHIP

OTTER CREEK TOWNSHIP occupies the middle of the northern tier of townships of Vigo county, and is bounded west, east and south by the townships of Fayette, Nevins, Lost Creek and Harrison, and by Parke county on the north.

From Fayette Township it is separated by the Wabash river, which washes the entire western side. The township is further watered by Otter Creek (from which the township takes its name), which flows from the east to the west side in an irregular though generally western direction.

Otter Creek and Sugar Creek in the northern part of the township furnish fine water for stock and afford good drainage for the sections through which they flow. In former times Otter Creek afforded water power sufficient to run a mill and distillery of considerable dimensions built by Abraham Markle in 1816. His son, Napoleon Markle born in 1819, was the first white child born in the township.

The big ditch of the Wabash & Erie Canal was located in the western part of the township. The old Lafayette & Terre Haute wagon and pack horse road, one of the first opened in western Indiana, passes through the township from north to south. Along this road many of the early settlements were made.

Among the first, and possibly the very first settlers, were the Baldings from New York, and Jacob and David Lyon from Ohio. These men opened farms in 1816, locating in the central part of what

is now Otter Creek Township, but what was then Knox county, and a year later Sullivan county. Another source states that a Mr. Briggs was probably the first settler as he made improvements in the south-eastern part of the township as early as 1816.

In 1817 Joseph Evans built a cabin in the eastern part. Gershom Tuttle settled with his family in 1818. William Watkins came with his family from Ohio in 1819 and settled at Markle's Mill on Sec. 36.

William Denny, A. M. Ostrander, William Johnson, Thomas White, Anthony Creal, Isaac and Jacob Balding were prominent among the first settlers.

The first school house in Otter Creek Township was built of logs near Markle's Mill as early as 1820. Dr. Hotchkiss held school here about three months in the year.

The first post office in the township was established about 1840 in the store of the postmaster Enoch Dole. Mr. Briggs was the first Justice of the Peace.

The first church in Otter Creek Township was the Union Church on the Lafayette Road about 1/4 mile north of Otter Creek which was built about 1840 and dedicated by Rev. Jewett. In 1867 the Methodists built a church on the Lafayette Road near the Parke county line. Another Methodist church is the Rose Hill church, located on the range line road, one and 1/4 miles north of Otter Creek. This church was built in 1869.

Cemeteries listed in Otter Creek Township are the Otter Creek Union in Sec. 35 on Lafayette Road at Stop 18; Lyons in Sec. 14, 2 miles north of Otter Creek Union; Keiger in Sec. 11 on bank of the canal and 1/2 mile farther north of Lyons; the Denny Cemetery on the Hasselburger Road; Wood in Sec. 12 one mile below Atherton east of the C. & E. I. Railroad on the bank of Spring Creek; Sparks Cemetery in Sec. 18, 1 1/2 miles south of Wood opposite the old

Cottrell Elevator; Evans Cemetery in Sec. 19 south and east of Sparks on "Evans Lane"; the Markle Cemetery on Fruitridge Avenue; Havens in Sec. 29; Kennedy in Sec. 30 on hillside south on Rosedale Road on the west side; Balding in Sec. 25 west of road and south of Rose Hill; and Phillips in Sec. 19 1 mile east of Rose Hill.

History of

PIERSON TOWNSHIP

PIERSON TOWNSHIP is situated in the southeastern corner of Vigo county, bounded on the north by Riley Township, on the south by Sullivan county, on the east by Clay county, and on the west by Linton Township.

It was named for Willis Pierson who came from Kentucky in 1820 with his brother Moses Pierson, both Baptist ministers.

The first settlement was made in 1820 by Moses Evans and William Welch who came from Ohio. In 1821 Nathan Piner, the Walkers, the Brocks, and Charles Johnson (who was the first school teacher) located in Pierson Township.

In 1824 Joseph Liston, one of the earliest settlers in Indiana, came to Pierson Township from Prairieton Township, having come from Ohio to Knox county, Indiana in 1808, and in 1811 to Fort Harrison Prairie. At this time there was no other white settler nearer than Carlisle, Indiana. Here he is supposed to have plowed the first furrow turned in Vigo county, and with five men companions planted 75 acres of corn. However, he was scared off by the Indians, and one of the party bought the crop which was later sold to the soldier garrison at Fort Harrison that Fall for fifty cents a bushel.

Union Baptist Church was organized in 1822. Mt. Olive Christian Church was built in 1869, Fletcher Chapel in 1871, Pleasant Grove Centenary Church was organized in 1860 and built in 1864.

The first marriage occurring in Pierson Township was that of Jesse Kester and Sally Johnson. John Hodge was the first Justice of the Peace.

Centreville was laid out in 1837 on land owned by Addison Williams. The first tradesman to locate was Joseph Stutsman who put up a tanyard. In 1842 Charles W. Stewart opened a boot and shoe shop in a log house. Peter Y. Buskirk and his brother arrived in 1843 and began business as cabinet makers. John B. Smith came with them and opened a blacksmith shop. The first physician to locate in Pierson Township was John E. Lloyd who moved into Middletown in 1843 in what was known as "the white house" because it was the only building which had received even a daub of paint.

Early storekeepers in Pierson Township were Dodson and Jenkins in 1844, Wright and Kemble, Martin Hale, followed by Samuel Stores in 1847. About this time the Wabash & Erie Canal was under construction and a lively trade was done at this point during 1847 through 1849. In 1850 the Canal was finished, the water let in and navigation opened with a daily packet running to Worthington, Indiana. The panic of the late 1850's put a stop to the prosperity of the community.

There are eight known cemeteries in Pierson Township. The Brown Cemetery 2 miles east and a half mile north of Pimento, and Old Brown Cemetery farther east are both in Sec. 18. Fletcher Chapel is in Sec. 30; Mt. Olive in Sec. 31 near the southwest corner of the township; Twin Groves in Sec. 13 2 miles east of Blackhawk and a half mile north; Taylor in Sec. 27 is 1 mile west of the Ruggles Cemetery which is in Sec. 35 and north of Lewis about 1 mile and to the railroad to the west; Stephens Cemetery in Sec. 36 is located on the edge of Lewis, Indiana.

History of LOST CREEK TOWNSHIP

LOST CREEK TOWNSHIP, as the name implies, derives its title from the creek of that name which flows through it. The creek obtained its name because of its spreading over the sand prairies on leaving the township and having no outlet to the river.

Lost Creek formed an extensive swamp which evaporated in the summer and rendered that neighborhood very unhealthy. Later, however, it was conducted to the river by a large ditch, and the reclaimed land is the best in the county.

Lost Creek Township was formed September, 1831, as follows: "Congressional Township 12 North, of Range 8 West, shall be and constitute Lost Creek Township." At that time elections were set at the house of Abraham Greene, and John Jenckes was chosen as inspector of elections.

Located on the east side of Vigo county, the township is bounded on the north by Nevins Township, on the east by Clay county, on the south by Riley Township, and by Harrison Township on the west.

The first Vigo county atlas states that the township land was mainly clay loam, productive in wheat, grass, corn and well adapted to fruit. Originally mostly timbered, it contained some prairie.

The first settler was Zadoc Reeve from New York. Other early settlers were Samuel Slavin, Sylvanus Ripley, Thomas Patterson, James Watson, Isaac Cruzan, Joseph Haskins, Ralph Wilson, the Montgomerys, James Terrell, Moody Chamberlain and Walter Dickerson.

Another reference lists the first settlers, arriving in the township about 1820, as John Colton, Daniel and John Jenks, Anthony Connor and William Phillips. Further south settled Moore and George Hussey. In 1825 Zadoc Reeves located in the Jenks settlement, having come from Carlisle, where he had settled in 1819, to build a distillery for Jenks. Reeves was a carpenter and wheelwright.

Another old settler, and probably the first one, was Matthew Gray who devoted his time to hunting, his sole means of livelihood. His wife used to wear shoes made of untanned hog skin, and his own garments were mostly skins and furs of game he had killed.

The greatest drawback to settlement was the lack of good roads. In 1836 the National Road was laid out through this township and greatly improved the transportation situation.

Zadoc Reeves was elected the first school trustee. Dr. Jenks and William Dickerson, a Revolutionary War veteran, were elected justices of the peace.

The first church was erected by the Methodists in 1837, a log structure located a half mile west of where Seelyville is now.

In the northern part of the township was a large settlement of colored people, nearly all from North Carolina. Moses Archer and Richard Roberts arrived here in 1830, followed by Jordan and Abel Anderson in 1831. A year later, Jerry Anderson, K. Roberts and Dixon Stewart arrived and proceeded to make farms out of the wilderness. The first colored Methodist church was organized here about 1840 and five years later they built a church.

I know of nineteen cemeteries in Lost Creek Township. Highland Lawn and the Hebrew Cemetery are located in Sec. 19. The Coltrin Cemetery in Sec. 18 is a half mile north of Highland Lawn across the railroad. Habermayer in Sec. 31 is on the Hulman Street Road less than a mile east of the township line. Anderson Cemetery is in Sec. 5; Baptist in Sec. 2; Patterson in Sec. 11; Hoskins in Sec. 12; Gray in Sec. 20; Swalls in Sec. 22; Moore in Sec. 15; Kimmerle in Sec. 14; Hyde in Sec. 24; and Turner in Sec. 36.

The Cheek Cemetery in Sec. 23 is a little over a mile south of Seelyville. The Reeve Cemetery in Sec. 17 is far back from the road and east of Rose Polytechnic Institute. There are three cemeteries in Sec. 16 - the Chamberlain Cemetery, the Dickerson Cemetery south of the highway west of Glenn at the Pennsylvania Railroad, and the Baker Graveyard. Lost Creek Township has more cemeteries than any other township in Vigo county.

History of LINTON TOWNSHIP

LINTON TOWNSHIP is situated just south of the center of Vigo county, and is composed of what was formerly part of Pierson and Prairie Creek townships. Its boundaries are Honey Creek Township on the north, Sullivan county on the south, Pierson Township on the east, and Prairie Creek Township on the west. It was organized in 1841, receiving its name from one of the early settlers and land owners, W. C. Linton.

Most of the early settlers came from Kentucky, the first being Moses Evans who arrived in 1812. The location where he first settled was named Evan's Prairie.

About the same time Thomas and William Pound, Hamilton Reed and James French came in. James French was a bell-maker by trade, and did a large business trading bells to the Indians. He was driven off by the Indians shortly after his arrival here, but returned again when Fort Harrison was erected.

David Goble was another hardy pioneer who settled here among the Indians, giving his name to Goble's Prairie. Elijah Pound, Joel and Ephraim Kester, William McGlone, the Frakes, Reuben H. Beauchamp, David, William and Arthur Boyll, Ephraim, Herman and Smith Sparks, John Carr and John Gunn were among the first settlers.

The first mill was a horse mill built by John Gunn. Next was a water power mill built by Bright Thomas, a colored man, and

one of the first settlers. He was a very ingenious character and a natural mechanic. The first pioneers came from miles around to have their corn ground at this mill.

Benjamin Kerchival taught the first school in a log cabin on the south side of the township. Samuel R. McLean was the first school trustee.

The first church was the Second Prairie Creek Church, a log church built in 1828. In 1852 a newer structure was built in Sec. 17.

The first railroad station was called Hartford, but the post office was called Pimento, so the only town in this township was called first Hartford, and now Pimento. The town was laid out in 1852 on land owned by Israel French. The first man to locate in the town was Thomas French who erected a store and dwelling house. A year later Harvey Weeks arrived and went into partnership with him.

A coal shaft was sunk about 1/2 mile south of Pimento about 1875 by a stock company, but was only operated 2 years when water broke in making the expense of operating too great and the company collapsed.

There are, or were, six cemeteries in Linton Township. Johns Cemetery is in Sec. 11; Ring Cemetery in Sec. 28; McGlone in Sec. 29; Underwood in Sec. 20; Kester Cemetery in Sec. 17; and Second Prairie Creek Cemetery in Sec. 18.

History of

PRAIRIETON TOWNSHIP

PRAIRIETON TOWNSHIP is shaped like a triangle, bounded on the north and west by the Wabash river, on the south by Prairie Creek Township, and on the east by Honey Creek and Linton Townships. The land is very rich, mostly prairie and bottom land, and peculiarly adapted to growing corn.

Honey Creek flows through this township, and there are many interesting stories explaining how this creek was named. In pioneer days there were a great many wild bees found along its banks. Supposedly a hunter was out hunting one day, along this stream, and after tramping for sometime, became tired and laid down to rest. After awhile he began to look about him as he lay on his back and discovered seven bee trees before he got up.

Another story, probably the correct one, was told by William R. Bentley, son of Elisha Bentley, one of the first settlers who was an Army scout for General William Henry Harrison. As he was on his way to the Battle of Tippecanoe he and several others left the camp, contrary to orders, for a hunt, and finding a bee tree proceeded to fell it. As it fell, it went into the creek and broke open, spilling the honey out into the water. Therefore, the party named it "Honey Creek" moaning for the lost honey. This was in 1811 when Harrison's army encamped for the night on the banks of Honey Creek before continuing their march on to the site of Fort Harrison which they erected before going on to fight in the Battle of Tippecanoe.

As early as 1816 and 1817 Moses Hoggatt, John and Stephen Campbell, Elisha Bentley and Stephanus Hayworth were settled here in what is now Prairieton Township.

About the same time came Isaiah Wilson, Caleb Arnold, William Winters and Charles Taylor. Arriving here as early as 1816 or before were David M. Jones, James Wilson, Enoch Harlan, Jeremiah Hayworth and Ezra Jones. Moses Hoggatt entered a section of land where Prairieton, Indiana is now located, building the first cabin at a point of timber.

James Strain was here at an early day and lived on the bottom land in Sec. 6. His son John Strain was a Captain of Militia and the settlers used to meet at their farm for general muster and to train. The old barnyard and part of the Ogle farm used to be the old muster ground. Captain Strain while in the U. S. Service as a common soldier was sentenced to be shot for sleeping while on duty, and it is stated of him that he had been brought out to be executed and was seated on his coffin ready for death when a reprieve came from the commander-in-chief just in time to save his life.

In 1817 and 1818 came Thomas Ferguson and his family, Otis Jones who settled at Greenfield Bayou, George Southard, John Thompson, Sandford Hayworth, the Montgomerys, Joseph Benight, Joseph Thayer, John Cox the blacksmith, James Lee and family, the Paddocks, Moses Reynolds and his brothers David and Robert, Amos P. Balch, Gen. Henry French, Henry T. Irish, Ralph White and others.

The village of Prairieton, Indiana was for a long time called Hoggatt's Store. It was platted and laid out in June, 1836 by Robert Hoggatt and incorporated in 1870. Moses Hoggatt kept the first post office here.

The first school in Prairieton Township was taught by Duncan Darrow in a log house built about 1820 or earlier, just north of Prairieton. Joseph Thayer taught the school at Greenfield Bayou.

The first church built in the township was by the Methodists in 1838 or 1840. The Society of Friends, the Quakers, was probably the first church organized in the township, as many of the first settlers were Quakers. The first meeting was held in 1818 or 1819 in a log house in the northern part of the township which had been built for a winter school.

There are only 3 cemeteries in Prairieton Township. They are the Musgrave Cemetery in Sec. 12; Prairieton in Sec. 25; and New Harmony in Sec. 34.